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ABSTRACT

This final report describes activities and accomplishments of a federally supported 3-year project at Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges (Pennsylvania) to develop three interdisciplinary "conference courses" in international affairs. The courses were offered in the political science department and were titled "North-South Cooperation for Third World Development"; "Human Rights in International Affairs"; and "Issues in the Inter-American Dialogue." The courses used a policy-making orientation, placed students in direct contact with policymakers, and converted student interest in international issues into problem-solving skills. The objective was to involve students in making a "commission" recommendation for action, and required rapid acquisition of relevant knowledge, committee work to achieve trade off and consensus, and cooperative report writing. Faculty from the Departments of Economics, Philosophy, and Spanish re-tooled current knowledge and pedagogical techniques for the courses. An outside expert policy evaluator critiqued the students' reports, and an outside expert on learning evaluated the impact of the course on students. Evaluation indicated project objectives were met, that the conference course is an effective alternative to conventional courses, and that the conference course is better able than conventional courses to hone skills such as developing a policy-recommendation orientation, cooperative learning, consensus decision-making skills, and relating directly to subject-matter experts. (DB)

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HAVERFORD COLLEGE FINAL REPORT TO FIPSE
"INNOVATION IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: THE CONFERENCE COURSE"

A. Cover Sheet

Grantee Organization

Haverford College
370 Lancaster Ave.
Haverford, PA 19041

Grant Number

P116B00587-92

Project Dates

Starting Date: August 1, 1990
Ending Date: July 31, 1993
Number of Months: 36

Project Director

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Department of Political Science
Haverford College
Haverford, PA 19041
Tel.: 215-896-1055

FIPSE Program Officer:

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B. Summaries

1.Summary of Basic Activities and Results

Haverford College, serving Bryn Mawr College and Haverford, enriched the curricular offerings of the Political Science Department by offering three inter-disciplinary "conference courses" 1991-1993: "North-South Co-operation for Third World Development;" Human Rights in International Affairs;" and "Issues in the Inter-American Dialogue." These courses approached international affairs from a policy orientation, placed students in direct contact with policymakers and converted student interest in international issues into problem-solving skills. The objective of the courses was to make a "commission" recommendation for action, requiring rapid acquisition of relevant knowledge, committee work toward trade off and consensus results, and co-operation in writing a report that recommends action based on appropriate analysis. Faculty from Economics, Philosophy and Spanish joined Political Science faculty in re-tooling current knowledge and pedagogical techniques for the courses. Students worked separately and together many hours outside scheduled class sessions. Outside speakers highlighted current major issues, an Outside Expert Policy Evaluator read and critiqued the students' reports, and an outside expert on learning evaluated the impact of the course on students. The major objectives were fulfilled: Conference Courses are established within Political Science and will be replicated; the students and the faculty involved can distinguish between academic research and policy analysis, students have had and will continue to have an opportunity to exercise policy skills and connect to the policymaking community in international affairs.

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Project Reports: 3 Course Syllabi and 3 Student Conference Reports

"International Co-operation toward Economic Development in the Third World" 1991

"U.S. International Human Rights Policy" 1992

"Sustainability: Taking a Long Term Approach. The Haverford-Bryn Mawr Inter-American Dialogue" 1993

2. Executive Summary

INNOVATION IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: THE CONFERENCE COURSE

HAVERFORD COLLEGE
HAVERFORD, PA 19041

Harvey Glickman, Project Director
Department of Political Science
215-896-1055

A. Project Overview:

Haverford College, within its bi-college curricular co-operative arrangement with Bryn Mawr College, offered a series of three policy-oriented, inter-disciplinary conference courses (1991-1993). The three courses completed were: 1991 - "International Co-Operation toward Economic Development in the Third World, North/South Relations" (team teaching arrangement with faculty members from economics and political science); 1992 - "U.S. International Human Rights Policy, Human Rights in International Affairs" (philosophy and political science); and 1993 - " Issues in Inter-American Relations, the Inter-American Dialogue" (Spanish and political science). The courses involved students in co-operative research and writing in a policy development framework. Within the course framework they made extensive use of visiting outside experts who were involved in policymaking activities which addressed international issues. One of these visitors each year served as substantive evaluator of the students' draft report from the perspective of the current international policy community, enabling the students' final report to sharpen the report's connection to the form and content of contemporary issues. The projects education evaluator reported high motivation of students entering the courses, high levels of student satisfaction with course experience, and consequent greater involvement with international matters, although the questionnaire results showed weak connection between course activity and knowledge increments. Support from non-FIPSE counterpart funds permitted instructor grants to fifteen selected course "graduates" to help these students acquire experience in international policy agencies in the summer following each course.

B. Purpose of the Project:

The problem addressed by the project is the gap in learning about international affairs. The instructional participants in the project sought to create a learning alternative to the conventional classroom dialogue between teachers and students in the field of international affairs. The instrumental goal was to create a policy-oriented course in international affairs, relevant in substantive policy issues, as well as instructive in procedural co-operative efforts toward making public policy recommendations. For teachers, the purpose meant re-orienting and broadening the historical-analytical skills beyond their departmental disciplines in dealing with international affairs and moving toward dealing with policy questions and policy issues. It involved pairing faculty members from different departments in preparation and in team teaching. For teachers and students, it involved expanding the learning environment to include contact with policy practitioners. For students, it meant converting their interest in world problems into problem-addressing and problem-solving skills by in-course contact with policy practitioners and in-course co-operation with one another in primary research and, then, conversion of research into committee consensus on action.

C. Background and Origin

The concept of conference courses emerged organically from activities of the Departmet of Political Science and from Haverford College's historical outreach toward global matters. Haverford's Quaker origins provided a positive context for international concerns and in consensus decision-making. The Political Science Department historically was strong in comparative government and international relations. Outside speakers and connections to public service have been a regular feature of political science education at the College. The current President of Haverford comes from a career in international public service and the Project Director's current work in African governments is oriented toward public policy. The college places few hurdles in the path of curricular innovation.

D. Project Descriptions

The conference course project entailed support for the following activities:

-summer retooling for the two faculty members who directed each of the new conference courses (six faculty members in three courses over three years);

-summer research assistantships for students (two each summer, supported by non-FIPSE counterpart funds) who aided in retooling and planning under faculty guidance;

-the presentation of the conference course within the curriculum, organized to include readings and discussions led by faculty, and student initiative as a whole class and as student task groups to do research and write interim and final reports;

-contact with selected visiting experts/practitioners who came to class and offered public talks to the campus community;

-an on-campus critique by a policy expert of the final conference course student-written report;

-post-course internships in national and international organizations and NGOs (producing ten over the three years) for selected course "graduates;"

-an evaluation by an outside professional in education research each year in aid of parallel on-campus evaluation.

E. Evaluation/Project Results

The following short range (SR) and long range (LR) objectives, we believe, were achieved, or were set in motion toward achievement, for the students and faculty:

Students:

I) Converting interest in world problems into policy-oriented knowledge, by offering opportunities to:

1) identify, investigate and assess choices facing policy-makers in the process of making current public policy decisions (SR);

II) Converting interest in world problems into policy problem solving skills, by offering opportunities to:

1) practice interactive discussion, role-playing and group deliberation in contributing to policy recommendations(SR)

2) write clearly for policymakers(SR)

III) Adding another dimension to liberal arts education, by offering:

1) a glimpse of the professional environment of careers that contribute to international policy making(SR)

2) an appreciation of some of the problems of world citizenship in the 21st Century(LR).

Faculty:

IV) Expanding the knowledge of instructors who analyze international problems by exposing them more directly to policy questions, by offering an opportunity to

1) cross disciplinary lines in investigating issues, by

---summer retooling (SR)

---interacting with policy actors(SR).

V) Sharpening the skills of faculty, by offering an opportunity to
1) interrogate and comment rather than lecture in courses(SR)
2) create a program that would provide instructional feedback when used elsewhere (LR).

The evaluation process proved more anecdotal than comprehensive, due to a breakdown in the questionnaire analysis as well as too small a cohort of non-course takers. Nevertheless the evaluation is of a piece and confirms a positive response on the part of students and faculty involved, although both students and faculty now regard a conference course as more work than a conventional course. The evidence confirms increased learning and interest in international affairs. The Political Science Department will continue to offer two conference courses on U.S. foreign policy, one regarding Latin America and one regarding Africa.

F. Summary and Conclusions

Conference courses at Haverford can be deemed a success; they constitute an effective learning alternative to conventional lecture and discussion courses; indeed they hone skills oftentimes underweighted in conventional courses, such as, a policy recommendation orientation, co-operative learning, consensus decision outcomes, and contemporaneous interface with subject matter experts. They take more time and more effort than the conventional course, for students and faculty. They require an assurance of a steady flow of resources for faculty re-tooling, for library assistance and for visiting experts.

G. Appendices

Syllabi, Student Conference Reports: Appendices A, B,C.
Outside Learning Expert Evaluation Reports: Appendix D.

C. Body of Report

Project Overview:

How did the project start? Bearing a commitment to preparing students for leadership roles in a diverse and rapidly changing world, Haverford College has striven to provide opportunities in which these students can relate their academic knowledge to real world experience. This project started with the President of Haverford College in 1989 calling for innovative approaches to international studies from the faculty with the above circumstances in mind. The Project Director responded, based on his interest in policy approaches to political study. The call for applications from FIPSE thus came when Haverford was seeking new approaches to teaching international affairs. The approach of the project synthesized elements already positively regarded at Haverford, such as inter-disciplinary team teaching, re-orientation of faculty and students toward a policy approach (i.e., beyond description and analysis of a set of international problems to recommendations for action), self-directed and co-operative research and writing on the part of students, extensive contact with outside policy experts, expanding funds for summer internships in public service. To this mixture was added two major elements: substantive evaluation of the students' co-operative report by one outside expert, and evaluation of student learning by an outside learning expert.

FIPSE support, amplified by Hewlett funds (which became available in the same time period and continue for one year beyond) enabled Haverford College, within its bi-college curricular co-operative arrangement with Bryn Mawr College, to offer a series of three policy-oriented, inter-disciplinary conference courses in three successive spring semesters: 1991 - "International Co-Operation toward Economic Development in the Third World, North/South Relations" (in a team teaching arrangement with two faculty members, in this case from economics and political science): 1992 - "Human Rights in International Affairs" (philosophy and political

science); and 1993 - " Issues in Inter-American Relations " (Spanish and political science).

What happened? The following planned activities took place (with FIPSE support unless otherwise noted,.

-summer retooling for the two faculty members who directed each of the new annual conference courses (six faculty members in three courses over three years);

-summer research assistance for faculty by students (two each summer, supported by non-FIPSE counterpart funds) who aided in retooling and planning under faculty guidance;

-the presentation of three conference courses, organized to include readings, lectures and discussion leadership by faculty and students, student chairing of plenary sessions and committee meetings, student task groups, student-written interim and final reports;

-contact with selected visiting experts/practitioners who came to class and offered additional public talks to the campus community;

-an on-campus critique by a policy expert of the final conference course student-written report;

-post-course internships (non-FIPSE funds) in national and international organizations and NGOs for selected course "graduates;"

-an evaluation by an outside professional in education research each year in addition to and in aid of parallel on-campus evaluation by course instructors.

The courses involved students in co-operative research and writing --in varying intensity and extensiveness -- in a policy development framework. Within the course framework they made extensive use --within the same range -- of visiting outside experts who were involved in policymaking activities that addressed international issues. One of these visitors each year served as substantive evaluator of the students' draft report from the perspective of the current international policy community, enabling the students' final report to sharpen the connection to the form and content of contemporary issues. In the final year of the project the gap between these two student versions was much narrowed, as the outside evaluator made an early course visit as well as a later one.

The project's learning evaluator reported high motivation of students entering the courses, high levels of student satisfaction with course experience, and consequent greater involvement with international matters, with the questionnaire results showing some positive connection between course activity and knowledge or attitude change. Support from non-FIPSE counterpart funds permitted instructor grants to ten selected course "graduates" (the target was fifteen) to help these students acquire experience in international policy agencies in the summer following each course. Individual reports from these students exhibit high satisfaction.

Who was served? Principally served by the project were the 105 students, who gained enhanced experience of participating collectively in simulated policy formulation and recommendation with contemporary national and international political and economic constraints in mind; and who gained enhanced opportunity to test ideas continuously against situational parameters as defined in part by participant policy-making actors. The project also served the needs and interests of the students AND faculty involved, with spillover to others in both constituencies.

What were the outcomes? The conference courses continue, within the political science department, with two faculty members involved in the project continuing with conference courses on their own. In terms of a roll call of outcomes: 2 re-oriented courses instituted; 6 students (conference course co-chairs) sensitized to committee leadership roles in a policy framework; 6 students (summer assistants) learned about a wide range of policy materials and searching techniques; 10 students (interns) received in-depth policy training in the summer after experiencing course work; 6 faculty (team-teachers) re-tooled in policy dimensions; 105 students exposed to substantive and procedural problems in recommending policy. An undetermined number of students and faculty will benefit from inquiries from 7 colleges about the project.

Purpose of the Project:

The problem addressed by the project is the gap in learning about international affairs; the project was about seeking to narrow "the policy reality gap." (PRG). We perceived PRG in two dimensions: a gap in policy-oriented knowledge and a gap in policy-grappling skills. Thus the project sought to create a learning alternative to the conventional classroom dialogue between teachers and students in the field of international affairs. We saw PRG existing both for students and for faculty, not only at Haverford, but also at other universities and colleges.

In terms of learning behavior, we defined the knowledge deficit as:

*insufficient identification and assessment by students and faculty of the choices and decisions facing policy makers. We defined the skills deficit as:

*insufficient instructor interrogation and commenting in place of lecturing in courses;

*insufficient instructor encouragement of autonomous and co-operative learning; and

*insufficient student participation in courses which could be elicited through interactive discussion, contact with policy practitioners; and co-operation in learning and role playing.

The main instrument created to address the PRG was a policy-oriented course in international affairs, relevant in substantive policy issues, as well as instructive in procedural co-operative efforts toward making public policy recommendations. For teachers, addressing PRG meant re-orienting and broadening the historical-analytical skills beyond their departmental disciplines in international affairs and moving toward dealing with policy questions and issues. ["Policy" here meant managing or attempting to resolve a conflict of interests within time and resource constraints.] For teachers and students, addressing PRG meant expanding the learning environment to include contact with policy practitioners. For students, it meant converting their interest in world problems into problem-addressing and problem-solving skills by converting a conventional course into an action recommending commission, with in-course contact with policy practitioners, and in-course co-operation with other students in group-defined research and, finally, conversion of that research into a committee consensus on action.

We expected the experience of the initiative to carry over into decisions by students (some previously uninclined) to seek government and international policy careers. That appears to be the case, although we will need more time to assess this accurately. For faculty, we expected the experience to carry over into their research in policy-oriented directions, into repeating the teaching of Conference Courses beyond the grant period, into mentoring other faculty interested in replication of the courses, and into publicizing the program for possible imitation at other colleges. That has happened for three faculty members (half the number involved) in the first two respects abovementioned, while the continuation of the conference course permits spread of the idea over time.

The problem does not appear to need redefinition. The results of the project indicate that the approach we took to address the PRG problem had the presumed immediate effect on the faculty and students directly involved. In our environment, with students at the high end of exposure to international events, the main knowledge problem remains distinguishing between policy research and descriptive analysis, while the main skills problem remains co-operation in producing a consensus report and recommendations. Interest among students, in terms of participating in successor conference courses built up after the course's inauguration, remains high. At this point the project has had less effect on other faculty. Departments other than political science so far have not introduced conference courses. The political science department will continue two conference courses in the coming year and one or two a year afterward because we believe we are making the desired impact.

Administration of conference courses has not been part of our problem. The Haverford administration has been extremely supportive. The college speakers fund affords the resources to permit the conference courses to continue in a downsized version.

Background and Origins

Haverford College was founded in 1833 by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Today it is an independent, undergraduate, coeducational, liberal arts college with a student body of approximately 1150 students of diverse backgrounds and places of origin. Although non-sectarian, Haverford values and demonstrates its Quaker roots through the College's emphasis on integrity and freedom of conscience; the individual's responsibility to self and to the community; the close relationship of faculty and students; the interaction of the individual and the community; and the concern for the uses to which its students put their expanding knowledge. For this project, this meant a pre-existence of a college inclination toward autonomous learning on the part of students and an interest in the application of knowledge in the outside community.

The College maintains a strong interest and curriculum in international relations. Its Quaker heritage provides a context of witness for peace and involvement in international service. The content of a liberal education has expanded over the years, and the composition of Haverford's faculty and curriculum reflects those changes. The expansion of the College's faculty, which accompanied the growth in the size of its student body and the admission of women over the past two decades, provided an opportunity to bring faculty members to the campus with expertise and training in world areas outside the United States and Western Europe. The College currently boasts faculty spread over eight departments with research experience and language capabilities relating to North Africa and the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and South America, East Asia (Japan and China), South Asia and Russia. The numbers are relatively small, and Haverford still does not have fully developed area studies programs in each geographic area, despite close academic co-operation with Bryn Mawr College (consisting of unrestricted course cross registration and majoring).

Haverford, however, has selected three world areas for systematic interdisciplinary treatment: East Asia, Latin America, Africa (as wells as Africans in the Diaspora). East Asian Studies is a Department, with its own faculty and student "majors." Latin American Studies is a "Concentration" -- in effect a "minor" for students and a secondary study program for faculty. Africana Studies is also a Concentration at Haverford and a minor at Bryn Mawr. The two colleges have also created and share a thematic interdisciplinary concentration in Peace Studies. All programs at Haverford now develop co-operatively with Bryn Mawr. The current President of Haverford, Dr. Tom G. Kessinger, a historian of India, was called to Haverford from the International Program of the Ford Foundation and from field service in Indonesia and India. Previous Presidents all had strong international connections or interests. A speakers program, instituted by a grant in the 1950s, has provided for a number of international visitors with an interest in policy matters. What this means for this project is that Haverford is an environment conducive to international concerns in the curriculum and is a place where policy concerns are aired extra-curricularly.

Haverford College since the 1960s has offered a strong and varied program in international relations and comparative government supplemented by the course offerings at Bryn Mawr College. International relations courses address the nature of inter-state relationships and present materials historically and conceptually. Comparative government courses feature description and analysis of politics within states, in part within a context of interstate influences. Both sets of courses address certain global forces, such as imperialism, nationalism, cultural affinities and their effects on politics. Although the dominant concern of such courses is with institutions and policies in general, particular foreign policy problems, such as foreign aid or national defense strategy, trade agreements between certain countries, or military assistance in promoting conflict management between certain countries are also examined. The political science curriculum also includes certain courses devoted to global policy areas, such as arms control or development strategies. Students in international relations and comparative government courses at Haverford are

required to write independent papers on such issues. What this meant for this project is that pieces of the policy orientation to international affairs already existed at Haverford. *Organizational policies* did not have to change very much in order to put the present project in place. It remained for this particular initiative to pull together the pieces, generate enhanced resources, and create the policy oriented courses in the form of commissions of students designed to make action recommendations.

At Haverford all new courses are approved by the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and ratified by the faculty in a plenary session. Faculty from three different departments joined political scientists each year in making a new course presentation to EPC. In two cases, economics and philosophy, the inter-disciplinary conference course substituted for a departmental course outside political science. In only the third case of Spanish was a substitute separate course required in that department. The project was sufficiently attractive so that *outside funding* could expand FIPSE support through the three years.

Project Description:

The execution of the Project entailed:

A) staffing three course offerings in Political Science and three course offerings in co-operating departments, replacing staff time released from three standard courses;

B) summer retooling for six faculty members who offered these new courses;

C) summer assistantships for two students each of three summers who did research under the prospective faculty instructor's guidance in aid of faculty retooling;

D) per course participation of at least three guest experts on policy problems and one guest expert policy evaluator in each course;

E) post-course internships, targeted at five each post-course summer, in national and international agencies for selected "graduates" of the course;

F) course observation/visit and analysis of pre- and post-course questionnaires by education evaluator.

G) informing all college personnel touched by this Project (Business Office, Library, Secretaries, Visitors Office) of what was involved and enlisting their help.

The Project Director planned and administered each of the above tasks. The key *planning assumption* of the Director was the presumption of a latent interest in policy approaches, international subject matter and alternative learning strategies within the faculty. Given that assumption and pre-existing support in the Administration, the major *strategic principle* was that the Director's initiative would be greeted with favor. He needed to inform and perhaps to prod, but the expectation was that the principal operatives would follow through. That proved successful, with the usual caveats about timely approaches.

Planning and strategy development was carried out by the Project Director with the support and approval of the Provost. (A new Provost assumed office during the course of the project with no change in level of support.) The tactical planning and implementation of the project was in the hands of the Director, annually reviewed by the Provost. The effort required one course released time for the Project Director in each fall term.

The total budget for the project involved funds from FIPSE and the Hewlett Foundation, and was made the responsibility of the Project Director. The organization of each course, in turn, was placed in the hands of the co-operating instructors. Thus, actual expenditure of most funds and the correct separation of charges against the budget was in the hands of the course instructors and other staff at the College (e.g., Library, Secretarial), as well as the Director. This proved a key task of co-ordination for the Project Director. Overall financial administration was in the hands of the College Business Office, which operated in a skilled, efficient and sensitive manner.

The *strategy of implementation* proceeded as follows:

A. Establishing three international policy conference courses, one a year for three consecutive years. With the guidance of the Project Director, conference course topics were proposed and agreed to by course instructors. Topics were chosen that:

1) represented major, enduring policy problems at the global level;

2) related organically to the teaching and research interests of the faculty members who inaugurated the Conference Courses during the three years;

3) were broad enough to be re-arranged with different special interests for succeeding instruction in later years

4) lent themselves to exploring and debating different perspectives and alternative policy choices.

Each of the courses, because they were inter-disciplinary and a new effort, required an annual approval of the respective Departments (Political Science, with Economics, Philosophy, and Spanish) and of the College Educational Policy Committee, and, finally and formally, by the whole Faculty. The Project Director guided this process, with the course instructors taking the leadership in preparing the course prospectus for Committee consideration during the Fall semesters for Spring semester inclusion.

B. Re-tooling six faculty instructors and six student assistants to lead these courses. Course instructors chose their own student assistants and the manner of their preparation. These student assistants were paid with non-FIPSE funds. Several of them registered in the courses and took on leadership functions. The Project Director met with the two faculty members involved each summer for a preliminary and final discussion.

C. Choosing and recruiting for each course a group of visiting speakers and a consultant-evaluator from the world of public policy-making. Course instructors did this with the advice of the Director. Hewlett funds enabled commitments of higher than "FIPSE-scale" fees for some visitors. On the other hand, US government employees required only travel expenses, allowing for more than the originally planned number of outside speakers. The process of seeking and gaining commitments was monitored by the Project Director and benefited from his advice.

D. Awarding up to fifteen summer internships in international policy for student "graduates" of the course. (Due to last minute changes in plans only 10 grants were actually expended.) This was done by application to the course instructors and enabled by Hewlett funds. The Project Director was kept informed and he made two grants additional to those able to be made by course instructors.

E. Recruiting an outside professional learning evaluator. This was done by the Director. Fortunately, the same person, Professor Donald Brown, with back-up administrative support at the University of Michigan, was available for all three years. This eliminated the necessity of an on-campus auxiliary in learning evaluation. Professor Brown's visit was arranged in each case by the Director. His on-campus evaluation activities interfaced with on-going course activities and were monitored by the Director.

As to the *scale and intensity of the effort*, the Conference Courses occurred each Spring Term, in 1991, 1992, 1993. Students, sophomores and above, were chosen by the course instructors with the aid of the Project Director from student applicants who had taken a minimum of two semester courses in political science, at least one of which was in international relations or comparative government. Qualified foreign students or students who had studied abroad received some preference in order to make use of their experience and perspectives and were specially noted in the task groups in 1993. Students were awarded one course credit, 1/4 of their normal semester "load," for participation in the course. All students received a grade, determined by the two course instructors, based on their work plan. (Due to the tactical requirements and time constraints of course approval, the Project Director decided not to pursue the grade necessity issue, which would

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have been the logical end product of a real learning alternative.) Except for task group and conference leaders, who co-ordinated, edited and contributed to group efforts, every student wrote an individual paper as well as contributed to their task group and conference reports. Since the Political Science Department at Haverford enrolls approximately 350 students per semester and Bryn Mawr enrolls an additional 250, we were able to choose the participants from a large initial reservoir of qualified and interested students, with 39 to 68 students pre-registering or turning up on day one of the first two years. (Students knew of the pre-determined enrollment limit of 30, but they did not know what selection process would be applied.) In the third year the instructors decided to take a larger number, which resulted in a registration of 45.

The process by which we launched and carried out the Conference Course of 1991 reflects the prototype strategy and experience. Note certain modifications in practice in the second year 1992 and more changes in 1993. The announcement of the Conference Course in Fall 1990 drew 63 applicants, which led to an application and selection procedure devised by the course instructors, based on the students' experiences, their disciplines, and a balance of diversity of students' backgrounds and accomplishments. By reducing the registration number to about 30 we created a control group of non-selected students, with whom we could compare the course group, in terms of learning international affairs. This proved far more difficult to administer than we anticipated. All 63 answered a first questionnaire, devised by the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan, part of a larger national study of international affairs learning based at that University. 33 students were finally enrolled in the conference course. The selection procedure was based on a short informal questionnaire-application and final selection was made by the course instructors.

In 1991 for 1992 the announcement of the course drew 41 applicants, which led to the use of the application and selection procedure devised the previous year by the course instructors. All 41 also answered a first questionnaire. Thirty students were initially enrolled in the conference course, with two selectees dropping out for non-academic reasons. After an initial period of reading, lectures and discussion, students formed themselves into task groups. Based on internal assessment of the course in 1991, the instructors provided a take-home "mid-term exam," which required answering one of three questions in the form of a essay. Both instructors read and commented upon all essays. Both instructors attended all formal classes and circulated among the task groups. Instructors participated in and facilitated a number of the task group discussions, but they did not attend all such sessions, which took place within class time and in additional late evening time slots. The course instructors did not formally lead or direct the task group discussion process or the conference paper that resulted, although they entered into discussions and commented on parts of draft papers.

After an initial period of reading, lectures and discussion, students formed themselves into task groups. Task groups were chaired by more accomplished or more experienced students (drawn from the two former summer retooling assistants and other political science majors with several courses in international relations). As chairpersons, these students had special responsibilities for guiding the work of the group and for synthesizing the results. In practice,the Conference was chaired by two advanced students, chosen by the conference as a whole by majority vote. The student chairpersons wrote the final conference draft report in consultation with the task group chairs. That draft report was critiqued by the outside policy expert evaluator. It became the basis of the final finished report, written by the Conference chairperson(s). All students found information from sources outside the College, including interviews (some on the telephone) with the outside experts acting as course resource persons. The social science reference division of the Haverford College library prepared a source inventory and a computer search directory on the Conference Course subject for the use of students each year.

Both instructors attended all formal classes and circulated among the task groups. Instructors participated in and facilitated task group discussions, but they did not formally lead or

direct the task group discussion process or the conference paper that resulted. The students assumed the roles of members of a "White House Commission." They elected their own commission co-chairs and task group conveners. Individual students wrote drafts of papers which contributed to group reports, which in turn contributed to three drafts of the commission final report. This report was read in advance of the visit by the outside expert evaluator, in 1991 by Dr. Robert Berg, now Chair of the International Development Conference and the originator and inaugurater of the policy evaluation unit of USAID. [see Appendix for students' final report and policy expert's evaluation] Instructors in 1991 did not require individual papers from students; each instructor read the task group reports and discussed and co-ordinated their expectations with one another before entering final grades.

In 1992 the students again assumed the roles of members of a "White House Commission," with the goal of advising the President on a human rights based foreign policy. They elected their own commission co-chairs and task group conveners. Student research was largely self-directed, although greatly facilitated by a library prepared bibliography and class presentation. This 1992 commission report was read in advance of her visit by the outside expert evaluator, in this case Patricia Derian, now engaged in private consulting work, and former Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights. The students' final report was made after the policy expert's evaluation. Instructors received individual papers from students in 1992; each read half the total, perused the other half, and discussed and co-ordinated their expectations before entering final grades.

The conference's principal "conferring" was most dramatically focused during 3/4 of a semester, after students learned about the substance and dimensions of their international policy problem, under the direction of the faculty instructors. The Conference Courses made extensive use of outside experts and involved students in direct contact with policy makers. Round-table sessions were sometimes led by an outside visiting expert who also served as a resource person for the semester. Visitors were available for a two day campus visit and for individual student contact off campus during the semester. Each visitor offered a public lecture open to the campus community, thereby increasing sensitivity on campus to policy perspectives. Students confronted the presuppositions and strategies that policy experts brought to problem solving. The final recommendations constituted the collective product of each course, critiqued and evaluated by an outside expert.

In 1993, based in part upon discussions with instructors of the previous two years, and in part on the nature of the conference they supervised, the two instructors exerted more control over conference organization and the proceedings. "Issues in Inter-American Relations" was organized following the principle of trying to emulate as much as was useful or possible the workings of a "real" conference of the non-governmental organization in being, the Inter-American Dialogue, convening (in this case simulated) representatives of North and South America. The course structure could be divided into three major stages: Preparation, Field Work, and Report Production, although there was a degree of continuity provided by the regularly scheduled visits by outside experts. Each one of these stages was different in the kinds of contact that took place between instructors and students and also among students themselves; they also differed in the kind of work students were asked to perform.

Once the major issues in Inter-American relations had been identified, task groups had to be formed for each one of them. Students were asked to sign up to work on the areas that interested them or in which they had any degree of expertise. As distinguished from 1991 and 1992, the instructors in 1993 had the final say on the configuration of every task group, striving as much as possible to balance the diverse talents and backgrounds within each group, as well as within the class in general. The instructors' degree of familiarity with the students and their background proved invaluable in this stage of the process. Once students had been assigned to their groups, they were apportioned within each group according to the needs of each (i.e., the Economics and Development Task Group was initially divided in macro-economics [Growth] and micro-

economics [Poverty] sub-groups). Students themselves were made responsible for the division of labor within each group. The coordination among the task groups was one of the jobs assigned to the student chairperson -- in this year chosen by the instructors-- who would eventually be responsible for writing up the Final Report.

In order to provide the element of biculturalism that characterizes the meetings of the Inter-American Dialogue, students of Hispanic or Latin American background and all students judged to be sufficiently familiar with Latin American culture and language were asked to act within each group as a sort of cultural "watchdog" or advisor, or --whenever appropriate-- as the voice of the Southern Perspective in group deliberations. In addition, one week of the class meetings was devoted to readings on the history and status of the cultural relations between the United States and Latin America, emphasizing the role that cultural perceptions may have in the assessment and formulation of policy.

The main part of the Preparation phase consisted of regular weekly class meetings, where all students, regardless their task group affiliation, were assigned common readings on each one of the main topics, plus the abovementioned material on culture and cultural relations. The class discussions were led jointly by the instructors, but the task group in charge of each week's topic was asked to discuss the relevant issues and problems, confer with the instructors, and produce a list of questions or problems to be presented to the class in plenary meetings. The principal aims of these meetings were to ascertain the level of consensus regarding the key issues of future policies proposed by each task group, and to provide a sense of the connections between the work being done by all the task groups to the entire group.

Once the Preparation phase had been completed, the Field Work stage began. There were no regular scheduled full class meetings, but there were visits from outside experts on each of the topics. Members of the appropriate task groups were asked to meet with each speaker in order to get their impressions and their opinions on the issues the group was working on. In these meetings they presented some of their tentative proposals to the experts, asked for their guidance regarding policy alternatives, and sought clarification on some of the intricacies of the issues. Each task group was required to meet at least weekly in order to work on their part of the Draft Report. During this phase, students worked mostly on their own, preparing bibliographies and digging out information and supporting evidence for their task group proposals, which they would present to the class plenary in the form of draft recommendations.

The last stage was the production of the Final Report, in which the input from all the groups was put together to form a coherent and congruent set of policy recommendations. The draft was discussed in plenary sessions in order to hammer out compromises and resolve possible conflicts or internal contradictions; as in the "real world" Reports of the Inter-American Dialogue, those who stood outside consensus were asked to state their views in formal dissent to be appended to the Final Report. In the last plenary session, the Final Report was evaluated and critiqued by the Outside Policy Evaluator, Peter Hakim, director of the Washington-based Inter-American Dialogue, who had also been the first outside expert to visit the class.

Given the great number of students and the absence of stringent requirements to enter the class, there was a great deal of diversity among students in regard to knowledge of Latin America and Political Science, ranging from those having taken Introductory courses in Latin American Studies and Political Science to seniors majoring in Political Science and Latin American Studies Concentrators majoring in other disciplines. The expansion in numbers of students from 1991 and 1992 underlined this issue, which was already present in the previous two years. To tackle this, the reading assignments were given with the double aim of providing information and of preparing a common ground for the elucidation of the major topics. In addition, students had to become short-term experts in their particular areas of concern within their task group. Individual in-depth

research was part of the participation in each task group, and to reflect this aspect of learning, students were asked to produce a bibliography on the subject they had been assigned to research. Preparation and background was an aspect in which it was difficult to replicate the degree of knowledge and expertise of people who participate in the "real" Inter-American Dialogue. However, in the process of group and collective discussions, the unevenness in background and preparation became less apparent, and did not influence significantly the end product in many cases.

In 1991 post-course summer internships were awarded to two student "graduates" of the Conference Courses (supported by non-FIPSE funds), in the U.S. State Department and with the Sub-Committee on Hunger in the U.S. House of Representatives. Originally five were contemplated, but negotiations started later than anticipated, and positions were lost. (We started earlier in 1992 and we responded to opportunities turned up by students on their own.) The project director made awards to four "course graduates" for internships for summer 1992 in the U.S. State Department in Washington, DC, in Amnesty International in Philadelphia, in the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, and in the Center for Conflict Resolution in Columbo, Sri Lanka. In 1993 funds for four summer internships went to students working on: an examination of NGOs at the World Bank, human rights issues at the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), the rights of street children in a position with AID in Bolivia , and comparative urbanization in Washington, DC and elsewhere.

Evaluation/ Project Results

When we got started Haverford hoped to achieve the following short range (SR) and long range (LR) objectives for the students and faculty:

Students:

A) To convert interest in world problems into policy-oriented knowledge, by offering opportunities to:

1) identify, investigate and assess choices facing policy-makers in the process of making current public policy decisions (SR);

-- To convert interest in world problems into policy problem solving skills, by offering opportunities to:

2) practice interactive discussion, role-playing and group deliberation in contributing to policy recommendations(SR)

3) write clearly for policymakers(SR)

B)To add another dimension to liberal arts education, by offering:

1) a glimpse of the professional environment of careers that contribute to international policy making(SR)

2) an appreciation of some of the problems of world citizenship in the 21st Century(LR).

Faculty:

C) To expand the knowledge of instructors who analyze international problems by exposing them more directly to policy questions, by offering an opportunity to

1) cross disciplinary lines in investigating issues

---summer retooling (SR)

---interacting with policy actors(SR).

D) To sharpen the skills of international relations faculty, by offering an opportunity

1) interrogate and comment rather than lecture in courses(SR)

2) create a program that will provide instructional feedback when used elsewhere (LR).

Evaluation Techniques

Evaluation of the achievement of these objectives requires a number of non-standard techniques. It was managed overall by the Project Director and for student learning by Professor Donald Brown, Director of the Research Institute for Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. In connection with a larger project of the Center which involved student

learning of international affairs information we administered a standard a pre-course test and post course test in the first two years. (See Appendix) Unfortunately in the third year the answer sheets we received were defective, therefore we could not replicate the tests of the first two years. Dr. Brown made three annual site visits and the questionnaires in the first two years were analyzed by Dr. Oksana Melanchuk, a colleague at the Research Institute. In addition to observing a class, Dr. Brown spoke to about a third of the enrolled students in small groups. Written evaluations, constructed by the Project Director and the instructors in the courses, were completed each year by the enrolled students.

In working with Professor Brown we asked ourselves the following questions: How do we know we are achieving our anticipated outcomes? How do we know if the program, and the separate elements it entails, are making the impacts we project? With regard to students in particular, what have they learned about formulating group decisions? How would they apply the process or method, as well as the results, to other similar problems? The answers to these questions are more anecdotal than systematic. The analysis of the questionnaires could not use the third and final year's group due to unusable answer papers. The first two years showed some small differences in attitude toward action in international affairs between the beginning and the end of the term and between course takers and non-takers (the number of non-takers was still insufficient as an appropriate control group). As reported for the first year by Dr. Melanchuk, "those who were quite interested in politics but not enough to be actively involved and who took the course...profited the most from the class." Non course takers in the same category showed no change in attitudes. In the group in the second year among course takers only, there were a few changes in knowledge scores, and in political and psychological attitudes to international affairs in the direction of greater interest. On the other hand, Dr. Brown's interviews and observations, as well as responses to in-house course evaluations all indicated that students thought they learned more about the subject matter, about the policy approach to the subject matter and about making decisions and recommendations in concert.

A unique aspect of the program was the Outside Expert Evaluator (a public policy figure) built into each course. This person assessed (from a policy decision perspective) the accomplishment of short-term objectives, such as conversion of the students' "study skills" into problem-solving skills, and conversion of the students' writing skills into clear, action-oriented prose suitable for policy choice making. The success of our attempt to analyze in policy terms and to write for policy choices is, in one sense, best assessed by "the policy consumer." We feel we approximated this consumer in the person of the Outside Expert Evaluator. All these evaluators were enthusiastic in their praise of the students in terms of what they were able to accomplish in a short time and in the comparative sophistication of their reports. Yet all these evaluators emphasized the continuing shortfall in "political realism." In 1993 the particular evaluator was able to comer at the beginning and at the end of semester, thus reducing this shortfall.

The short term objective of practicing group deliberation is based on the premise that group decision making will more closely approximate the compromise of interests and perspectives that contribute to satisfactory policy. Success in achieving that objective was measured by the ability of the students to reach policy conclusions they found satisfactory as the course proceeded and by the assessment by the Outside Evaluator of the substance of the policies recommended by the students.

We also hoped to assess the substance and process of learning effects on both students and faculty. We wanted to know more about changes in values and attitudes dealing with policies and dealing with the methods of arriving at recommendations for decision.

The final short range objective was to have students glimpse the professional environment of careers in policy making. This was achieved by association of the students with the outside policy experts who serve as resource persons for each course. (An implicit long range objective here is entry into such careers by a number of students. The accomplishment of that objective

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would be assessed by following the careers of "graduates" of the course five years and ten years after graduation.)

Appreciating the problems of world citizenship in the 21st Century was a long range objective of the program for students. In the short run, the instructor in partnership with the outside professional evaluator tried to assess this by administering a pre-course test and a post-course test which got at an appreciation of dimensions of world citizenship by a series of questions on global concerns which measured parochiality, complexity and flexibility. Within the total sample, of which this was a part, the Haverford group was above average.

The achievement of the short range objective for faculty, crossing disciplinary lines to deal with policy questions by interacting with policy actors, was evaluated through the self-reports of the course instructors. The achievement of the final long range objective, of exporting the course to other colleges, remains to be finally evaluated by reporting the program in a suitable journal, such as P.S. and Political Science Teacher (American Political Science Association) or the newsletter of the International Studies Association, and by the results in adoptions elsewhere.

Judging from the speakers' assessments of their visits to the campus, the outside experts' evaluations of the final reports, and the students' own evaluations of the course in both formal written form and more informal conversations with the instructors and with learning consultant Professor Donald Brown of the University of Michigan, the project seems to have been successful in a number of ways: Guest expert speakers reported that they were impressed with the level of student interest, commitment and knowledge, while the final reports --after duplication and distribution to professionals -- drew comments indicating that the students' work received the respect accorded to internal policy papers in various agencies of government. Perhaps just as important, the students wrote in their own comments that they were surprised at the high level of their own performance. They felt that they had mastered vast amounts of material in a short span of time. At the end of the course each year they did feel as though they had become experts on the topic of their Task Group and that they had also become knowledgeable about the range of problems addressed by the conference. In addition, many stressed that they had come to recognize the high degree of interconnectedness of policy issues that had seemed so separate at first glance--such as, human rights and democracy on the one hand and migration on the other. Most also believed that they had struggled with and had begun to acquire the critically important skills involved in working on a group project. Finally, they had come to appreciate the difference, stressed early in the course, between drafting realistic policy recommendations and writing a scholarly research paper. Perhaps most significantly for the long term, they had wrestled long and hard with (and in the process been angered, disappointed and ultimately usually accepting) of the need for tradeoffs and for skillful political argumentation in reaching policy consensus without sacrificing moral principles and political commitment. On the other hand, all three Outside Policy Evaluators commented to the students on the difference between their final reports and those received or pressed upon official agencies. Trade-offs and paying a price remained less prevalent than policy experts would have preferred in an effort to be influential in policy determination.

The instructors in all three years reported considerable expansion of their own knowledge, reporting new insights into the disciplines into which they crossed. By the third year the course instructors felt that they had worked rather well together as a team, a phenomenon that grew incrementally each year. Perhaps 1993 was peculiar in that the differing disciplinary perspectives (literature and political science) remained geographically area specific; peculiar also in that both instructors were not USA-American (one was a Latin American while the other a Canadian). Nevertheless drawing from two disciplines in every year provided an interesting counterpoint and enriched the range of perspectives presented in the course of class discussion. The six instructors believed that they had learned a good bit, both in terms of substantive issues and teaching methods. All six instructors also reported an increased interest in encouraging role playing and mini-conferences in their regularly assigned courses. They also note that facilitating a conference

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enforces more in-course attention than "preparing lessons" and conventional lecturing or leading class discussions.

Nevertheless adopting a new learning framework meant overcoming specific obstacles, which can now be identified as:

1. The Policy Orientation, the Trade Off Question. In all three years the instructors and the expert visitors had to ease the students out of a purely descriptive or purely normative mode of discourse. For the students, the process of revising and refining the final report helped them to formulate positions both desirable and possible. By the third year this could be clearly anticipated, so it was focused upon and highlighted.

2. Interactive Discussion, Student Communication and Student Effort, Striking a Balance. In 1991 students adopted a consensus procedure, settled into allowing wide latitude in discussions, but discovered -- in the process of writing the final report -- that about one-third of the students behaved as "free riders." E-mail was introduced but used insufficiently. Many students called for a shift in the balance between faculty supervision and student initiative slightly in the direction of more supervision, more feedback opportunities, and more time and more faculty support devoted to student drafting of parts and stages of the conference report. In 1992 and 1993 instructors were more assertive about expectations and assignments at the very start of the course. Sub-committee heads took minutes at their meetings and passed them on to the instructors. The need to provide help to others in small groups acted as an incentive to do good work in a timely fashion. Nevertheless, some students in all three years lagged in co-operative activity and continue to leave their best work for individual final papers. E-mail and computer networking was inaugurated for all course participants and for the instructors by the second year. The result was that students put their draft reports on disk, commented on other reports, and the instructors could recommend changes -- all electronically. Students and instructors felt this could be developed further, even in non-conference courses.

3. Writing Clearly. To some extent in all three years the group dynamics of interactive discussion and consensus procedure undercut policy clarity. The students reduced an original hundreds of pages to a manageable size report, but everyone involved felt they could use more time. Having the Outside Expert Policy Evaluator meet with students at the beginning and at the end of the term in 1993 proved helpful in this regard. Instructors in 1993 hope to work out a year long version of the course in the future to deal with time constraints.

4. Students Missing Opportunities to Use Guest Experts Effectively. Discussions with guests did not seem to probe as deeply as they could have, although this improved each year. In part this is a problem of timing, since students know more by the middle of the term than at the start. Early visitors suffer. Instructors did more "priming" of the students each year and "tailoring" of the reading so that it dovetailed better with the contribution of the guest expert.

6. Insufficient Time as One of Four Courses. In the second and third years students were warned that a number of meetings of task groups outside normal class time would be required, and students responded favorably, but they complained about this all three years. Task group oral reports during class time reflected a high level of knowledge attained by individuals in a relatively short time. The students felt overburdened at times, forced to master large amounts of material and new skills in a very short period of time. Several students also noted that while the speakers visits were helpful, too great a time commitment was required given their responsibilities in other courses. The instructors also felt pressured by the brief time span within which the project was to be completed. The Outside Expert Policy Evaluator's final comments delivered on the last day of class might have been more useful if they could have been delivered earlier in the context of a draft version and later incorporated into the final report. Both the instructors and visitors also wondered whether a field trip (or two) to Washington might not be more instructive than visits by individual speakers to the Haverford Campus.

E. Summary and Conclusions: Conference courses at Haverford can be deemed a success; they constitute an effective learning alternative to conventional lecture and discussion courses; indeed they hone skills oftentimes underweighted in conventional courses, such as, a policy

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recommendation orientation, co-operative learning, consensus decision outcomes, and contemporaneous interface with subject matter experts. They take more time and more effort than the conventional course, for students and faculty. They require an assurance of a steady flow of resources for faculty re-tooling, for library assistance and for visiting experts. New interactive TV technology could become an important new resource. (Courses could set up their own "Nightline.") As a result of completing this project, all participants have a healthier respect for the breadth of knowledge required to comment on policy. On the other hand, it is clear that this is an effective way to learn about international problems. Students at Haverford-BrynMawr (and at comparable colleges) are able to master a great deal of information in a short time. Indeed they continue the retooling of faculty, so that the two us in political science who will continue these courses will also learn ourselves. Other faculty should consider the model here and use it, with one caveat, which is a comment on how our preliminary ideas have changed. This course is more than 1/5 a course "load" for a faculty member and more than 1/4 a course load for a student. Students and faculty need some extra time or "extra credit" to do this right.

G. Appendix Information for FIPSE. 1) FIPSE assistance was enormously helpful at the application stage. Helene Scher proved invaluable as a critic of this proposal and easy to work with later as program officer. A site visit might have revealed particulars of interest to FIPSE. Unfortunately, no site visits ever came to pass during the three years, although Helene Scher had one scheduled before she broke her arm. The three FIPSE Directors Conferences were only moderately connected to a Haverford educational experience. An offer to give a presentation was ignored in the third year. 2) Policy oriented courses ought to be possible at all colleges with connections to policy experts via interactive TV. They are also feasible and could be attached to field trips for students for state and local government issues. 3) Haverford is grateful for the opportunity provided by FIPSE.

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